(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken in addressing these deficiencies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The process of industrialization, urbanization, social change and the increasing pressure of population have posed new challenges for us. The Government of India accords high priority to environment protection and sustainable development. These concerns are duly reflected in our planning process. The Government of India has already taken a series of steps, including establishment of a regulatory framework to address these concerns.

Erosion of forest land, land sliding, etc., in Himalayan region

†1892. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the action Government are taking to prevent the problem of erosion of forest land, reduction in forest cover and land sliding, etc. in Himalayan region;

(b) the proposal for conservation of forest wealth in Himalayan region; and

(c) the action Government are taking to create awareness among the people of Himalayan region in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) The Ministry of Environment and Forests is implementing three major schemes; namely National Natural Resource Management Scheme (NNRMS), support to G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Develoment (GBPIHED), and Integrated Eco-development Research Programme (IERP). Under these schemes, the activities relating to assessment and mapping of Himalayan forest resources and evolving integrated management strategies for their conservation are undertaken. In addition, the National Afforestation Programme (NAP) Scheme of the Ministry provides financial support to Forest Development Agencies (FDAs) in the country for participatory

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

development of forest resources under the framework of Joint Forest Management (JFM). As on 28.02.2005, 195 FDA projects have been operationalised in 11 Himalayan States under the NAP Scheme to treat an area of 2.66 lakh hectares at a total cost of Rs. 415.78 crores.

(b) Research on aspects of soil erosion of forest land, reduction of forest cover, and occurrence of landslides are amongst the Research and Development (R&D) priorities of GBPIHED. Similarly, landslide risk assessment in Darjeeling, Himalayas, Environmental Hazard Zonation in Alaknanda Valley, Analysis of Forest cover and Land Use Dynamics in the Upper Catchment of Manipur are being undertaken under the National Natural Resource Management Scheme (NNRMS). Under the National Afforestation Programme (NAP) Scheme, expenditure upto 15% of the plantation component of the FDA projects is permitted for soil and moisture conservation works.

(c) The G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development undertakes knowledge dissemination of the relevant Research and Development activities by organizing on-site training programmes, conferences, workshops, meetings, awareness camps, etc.

Inclusion of Udanti, Achnakmar and Sitanadi Sanctuaries under Project Tiger

1893. SHRIMATI KAMLA MANHAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Chhattisgarh Government have sent the proposals for inclusion of Udanti, Achnakmar and Sitanadi Sanctuaries under Project Tiger;

(b) if so, the current status of sanctions of the above proposals; and

(c) if not yet sanctioned, the likely time-frame within which these proposals would be sanctioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In the 37th meeting of the Steering Committee of Project Tiger held on 23rd January, 2003, the inclusion of Achnakmar, Udanti, and Sitanadi Wildlife Sanctuaries of Chhattisgarh under the Project Tiger